

U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Western District of New York

Further inquiries: (716) 843-5814

138 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14202

PRESS RELEASE

February 9, 2004

***CONVICTIONS AND LENGTHY SENTENCES UPHELD FOR
VIOLENT CRACK COCAINE CONSPIRACY***

RE: UNITED STATES v. DENNIS FORBES and KEVIN PIERRE - APPEAL

United States Attorney Michael A. Battle announced today that the convictions and sentences of Dennis Forbes, age 36, of Rochester, New York, and Kevin Pierre, age 28, of Brooklyn, New York, have been upheld on appeal by the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York City. Forbes was convicted by a federal jury in Rochester on November 20, 2000, of one count of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute marijuana and 50 grams or more of cocaine base (crack cocaine), in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846, and one count of knowingly using an individual, who was then under 18 years of age, to commit a drug trafficking crime. In addition, on January 24, 2001, Forbes pled guilty to a separate indictment charging him with being a previously-convicted felon in possession of a firearm on August 11, 1999. On the drug charges, Forbes was sentenced to life imprisonment without release and a \$2,000 fine by United States District Judge Charles J. Siragusa. On the gun charge, Forbes

received a sentence of 10 years imprisonment to run concurrent to the life sentence on the drug charges and an additional \$1,000 fine. Forbes, a citizen of Jamaica, is subject to deportation after the service of his sentence if he is ever released from custody.

Pierre, who was tried with Forbes, was also convicted by the federal jury on November 20, 2000, of participating in the same conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute marijuana and 50 grams or more of cocaine base (crack cocaine). In addition, Pierre was convicted of one count of using a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c). Pierre was sentenced to 35 years imprisonment and a \$5,000 fine by Judge Siragusa. Pierre also has a sentence of 25 years to serve based on his conviction in Monroe County, New York, for manslaughter in the shooting death of Curtis Crawley on July 8, 1999, at 100 Chili Avenue in Rochester.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Frank H. Sherman, who handled the case, stated that Forbes and Pierre had been convicted of conspiring with over five other people to distribute cocaine base and marijuana in western New York between July 1998 and July 1999. Forbes and Pierre were found to be responsible for distributing at least 3.5 kilograms (7.7 pounds) of crack cocaine, primarily in the Rochester area. Forbes sold crack cocaine out of houses at 156 York Street and 82 Eddy Street in Rochester during much of the conspiracy. Pierre sold crack cocaine for Forbes out of the house at 156 York Street during that time. In affirming the convictions, the appellate court upheld the admission of evidence at the trial concerning Forbes' involvement in a "gruesome gunfight" on

December 22, 1998, during which Forbes was shot in the leg by Brett Harrington and returned fire, killing Harrington outside 844 Genesee Street in Rochester.

The prosecution of Dennis Forbes and Kevin Pierre in federal court resulted from an investigation conducted by the Rochester Police Department, with the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Peter Ahearn, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, the United States Marshals Service and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* * *